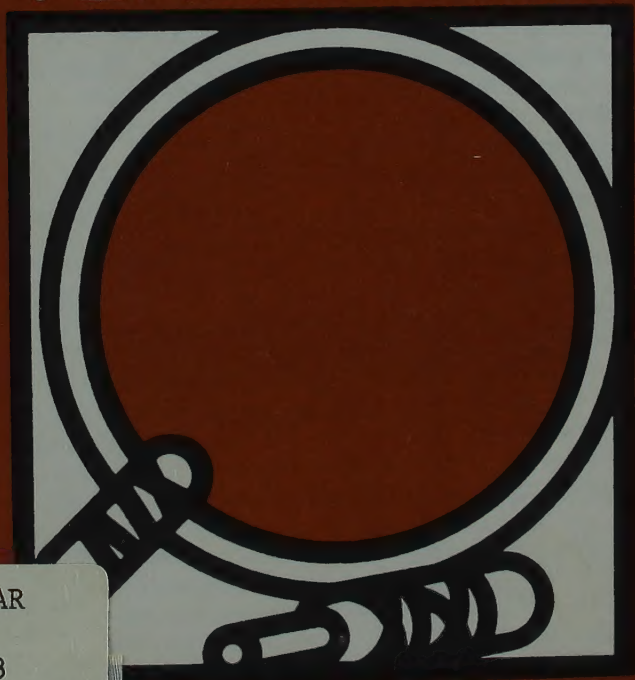


# Hay River

NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES



FORMATION

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## HAY RIVER

Hay River is a town of contrasts. One of the most obvious contrasts is the one that exists between "old town" and "new town". In the spring of 1963 a flood devastated the lower town and caused property damage estimated between \$600,000 and \$1,000,000. The Federal Government declared Vale Island a disaster area, and a new townsite was begun on the mainland south of the island. This is a "new town". Residents were given financial aid and encouraged to move to the new townsite. Many of the families remained on Vale Island, which has become primarily a commercial and industrial area. It is hoped that eventually all residents will live in the new town, so that Vale Island will be entirely commercial and industrial land. In the meantime, old town remains a rough place, while benefits of new facilities and services are given to the new town section.

Another of the contrasts that exist in Hay River is that of native unemployment in the midst of industrial opportunity. Work-Arctic, a new and successful operation, is trying to correct this situation. Work-Arctic is a non-profit organization operated under a grant from the Federal Government's Manpower Department. Work-Arctic attempts to provide a means of employment to residents who are outside the regular Hay River work force. Men engaged learn to develop good work habits, and then they seek employment outside of Work-Arctic, in the regular employment section. One of the projects undertaken by Work-Arctic crews was to clear a fire guard around Hay River. The men cleared 1500 acres of land and salvaged lumber.

The town of Hay River is scattered over the mainland and Vale Island, the largest of the islands forming the Hay River delta. Besides "old town" and "new town" there are two other fairly distinctive sections: Indian Village, on the east side of the river channel, and West Channel Fishing Village, on the east side of the west river channel. Vale Island is connected to the mainland by a branch of the Mackenzie Highway. Residents of the Indian Village travel across the channel to Hay River's commercial section by boat, although a round-about road to the Indian Village is under construction.

Hay River's location is 60° 51' North Latitude, 115° 43' West Longitude, at the mouth of the Hay River, which is the largest stream flowing into the western arm of Great Slave Lake. The Hay River received its name because of the abundance of wild

grasses growing along its shores. The river is about 300 miles long, with its source in the Rocky Mountain foothills. The Hay River flows over several beautiful waterfalls. Most are within driving distance of Hay River, and are equipped with camping or picnic-ing facilities.

## HISTORY

The original site of Hay River is where the Indian Village now stands. Hay River appeared on the maps as early as 1854, though the first permanent building did not appear until 1868. This was a Hudson's Bay Company fur trading post built on the east bank of the river channel. In 1869, Father Gascon arrived and established a Roman Catholic Mission. This mission operated until 1875, then it was abandoned. Anglican Mission was established in 1893 to serve the Slave Indians of the area. The R.C.M.P. opened a detachment post in 1925. Shortly afterwards a hospital was added. Hay River remained essentially a small trading post community until around 1940.

Settlement on Vale Island began in 1939. In 1942 the U.S. Corps of Engineers built an airstrip on Vale Island, which attracted more settlers there. In 1949, the link of the Mackenzie Highway which connects Hay River with Grimshaw, Alberta was completed. The area was opening up. A new town-site was laid out on the west bank of the channel, on Vale Island, and a smaller settlement was put at the mouth of the west channel, the site of a fish-packing plant and fishermen's homes.

With the coming of the Mackenzie Highway and the completion of the Great Slave Lake Railway, Hay River grew in importance. It became an important centre for communications and transportation, and an important base for explorations. With the new highway and pipeline activity in the Mackenzie region, Hay River's importance as a shipping point is ever increasing, and the town's population might double or triple over the next decade.

## ECONOMY

The town of Hay River has a multi-based economy, having transportation, communications, commercial fishing, and service industries. The port is a very active one, brought to life by barges, tugs, dredges, cable layers, buoy layers, cruise vessels, fishing boats, canoes, boats of the Coast Guard and Fisheries. Hay River is an ideal shipping base because of its strategic position at the head of the

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Mackenzie River, sometimes called "the Mississippi of the North".

Most residents of the old town are employed by the Northern Transportation Company Ltd., which owns much of the waterfront property and ships much of the freight to Mackenzie communities. In 1972 about 400 tons of freight were shipped along the Mackenzie River. Kaps Transport is also in the barge business. Kaps started about five years ago, and while not as big an operation as N.T.C.L., it is certainly growing. N.T.C.L. recently poured over \$10 million into new (and very modern) drydocking facilities, where boats are lifted from the water hydraulically and can be easily moved to a maintenance building for repairs all year round. N.T.C.L. is certainly gearing its facilities to meet future needs. Their two new "Lectro-lifts" are capable of moving 40-45 tons of freight at a time.

Hay River has a large and successful commercial fishing industry, with a fish quota of 4,800,000 lbs. of fish per year. Whitefish forms the largest catch, with lake trout in second place. Fish is shipped fresh or frozen to markets in New York and Chicago as well as southern Canada. The Canadian Fisheries Marketing Corp., run by the Federal Government, acts as purchaser and wholesaler of fish.

Hay River is also the headquarters for Canadian National Telecommunications operations in the western Arctic. The town's economic future probably lies in warehousing, service and supply.

## TRANSPORTATION

Hay River is linked by road from Grimshaw, Alberta and is on the Mackenzie Highway system. Trucking is big business here. Bus, taxi, and rent-a-car services are readily available. The town is also the railhead of Great Slave Lake Railway. Originally built to carry ore from Pine Point Mines, cars are made for bulk freight, and there is no passenger service. Several river transport and cruise companies have their operations based at Hay River. It is easy to see that Hay River is a transportation hub.

Hay River has a paved airstrip, 6,500' by 150', which is kept in top condition by the Ministry of Transport. Pacific Western Airlines has scheduled

flights from Edmonton daily except Sunday. Charter Air Services Ltd., Conwest Aviation Ltd., and Klondike Helicopters Ltd., are based at Hay River, and offer special charter services. Aircraft available for charter include Cessna 180, Otter, Twin Otter, and several types of helicopters.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Hay River is the main operations centre in the Northwest Territories for C.N. Telecommunications, which keeps northern settlements in touch with one another through microwave and landline services. C.N.T. also handles telex and telegram services. M.O.T., R.C.M.P., and the Mackenzie Forest Service operate their own radio telephones.

Hay River has two weekly newspapers, "Tapwe" and "The Hub". Edmonton papers are also flown into Hay River. C.B.C. provides the town with excellent radio broadcasting, and with T.V. broadcasting via Anik.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Comfortable accommodations are not lacking in town. The Ptarmigan Inn, a modern building in the new town complex, has 45 rooms, dining lounge, restaurant, beverage room and banquet facilities. The Hay River Hotel located in the old town, and adding to the "wild west" atmosphere with its rustic front, has 41 rooms, a restaurant, and beverage room. The Caribou Motor Hotel has 28 units and four kitchenettes. The Kozy-Court is a rooming house and restaurant. In addition there are tourist campgrounds located in and near Hay River, along the Mackenzie Highway system. The Chamber of Commerce just completed a new \$105,000 tourist campground at the mouth of the Hay River on Vale Island.

## MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The water intake plant at Hay River draws water from four and a half miles out in Great Slave Lake. Water is chlorinated and fluoridated, then piped to most Hay River homes. Homes without running water are serviced by water trucks. Sewage is piped or trucked away, and garbage is collected twice weekly. Electricity is provided to the town by diesel units. The community is protected by three fire halls, each with its own pumper and other equipment.

## HEALTH SERVICES

Hay River's thirty-bed hospital, the H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital, is operated by the Pentecostal Assembly of Canada. In addition there is a Hay River Health Centre run by the Department of National Health and Welfare. The town has three resident doctors, one dentist, and a chiropractor.

## EDUCATION

St. Paul's School, now run by the Government, teaches Kindergarten through grade two. The Princess Alexandra School teaches grades three through six. When you go to have a look at the secondary school (a must), wear your sunglasses. It is a structural wonder--and painted shocking purple. The students themselves selected the color and also decided to name the school after the well-known Arctic anthropologist Diamond Jenness. Some students attend vocational programs at Yellowknife or Fort Smith.

## STORES

Hay River's retail outlets include two supermarkets, two grocery stores, three general stores, one ladies wear and one men's wear shop, a sporting goods store, two furniture stores, three hardware stores, a drug store, liquor outlet, a gift and craft shop, one electronic sales and service, and a second-hand store. In addition there are three service stations, one barber shop, two hairdressers, and two insurance agents.

## CHURCHES

Hay River has a Roman Catholic Church, a Pentecostal Church, and an attractive Anglican Church. The United Church recently merged with the Anglican and donated their building for a museum. Jehovah's Witnesses and the Baha'i faith are also represented in Hay River.

## RECREATION

There is lots to do in Hay River besides see the sights. The town has a Community Centre and a sports centre which includes an arena for skating, hockey, and figure skating; baseball and softball diamonds, a three sheet curling rink, indoor heated swimming pool, two paved tennis courts. Three school gyms are also at the town's disposal. Clubs in Hay River include a Flying Club, Gun Club,



Canadian Legion, Kiwanis Club, and a judo club. The Igloo Theatre has movies six or seven nights a week. There is a beach area along Great Slave Lake, and water skiing and sport fishing are popular.

## ODDS AND ENDS

Hay River's 1972 population included about 2,500 permanent residents and almost 1,000 transients. The population is expected to double or maybe even triple in the next five to ten years because of pipeline and highway activity in the Mackenzie region.

Hay River is proud of its Territorial Centennial Library, a beautiful new building with a fine selection of books, including a "Northern collection" and rare books. This is also the home of N.W.T. Public Library Services, which keeps some 40,000 books in circulation in the settlements.

There is a branch of the Royal Bank of Canada in Hay River. Mail is delivered daily to two post offices (one in the old town and one in the new).

Liquor is available at restaurants, lounges, and clubs in Hay River, as well as at the liquor outlet — one of the bigger buildings in the new town commercial complex.

The new town commercial area, built to serve a town of ten or twelve thousand, has concrete sidewalks — somewhat of a novelty in the north.

The former United Church building has been transformed into a museum. The "Liard River", first boat built by the Hudson's Bay Company (in 1921) to serve the Mackenzie River, has also been preserved on the waterfront as a museum piece.

Several campsites are within easy access of Hay River. Hay River and Kakisa River are good spots for boating and angling, and there are fishing lodges scattered around the shore of Great Slave Lake. Wood Buffalo Park, Alexandra Falls, Lady Evelyn Falls, and Louise Falls all offer easily-reached scenic retreats.

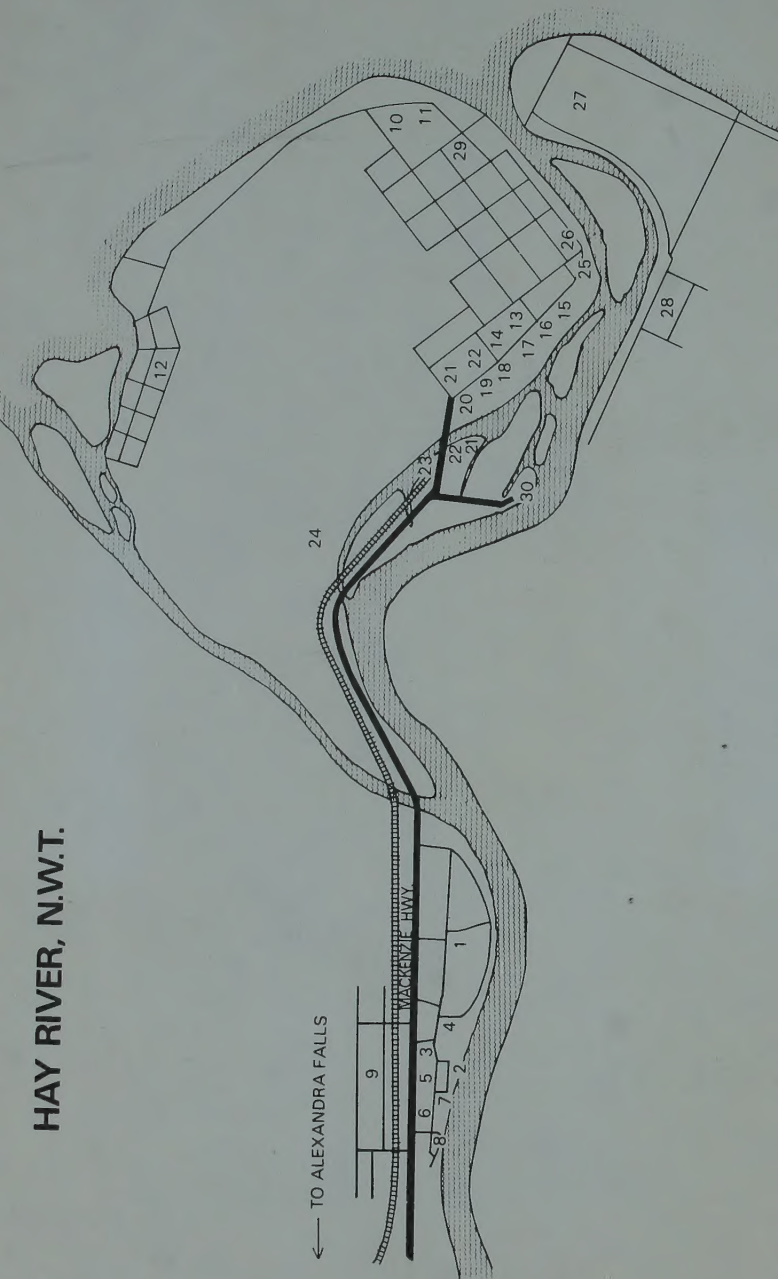
There is a tourist information booth in the new town, right near the Town Hall.







# HAY RIVER, N.W.T.



1. Hospital
2. Royal Canadian Mounted Police
3. Town Hall
4. Hay River High School
5. Library
6. Arena, Swimming Pool
7. Ptarmigan Inn
8. Ball Park and Tennis Court
9. Industrial Area
10. Tourist Camp Grounds
11. Public Beach
12. West Channel Fishing Village
13. Northern Transportation Co. Ltd. Office
14. Bus Depot and U-Drive
15. Hay River Hotel

16. Territorial Court
17. Shell Oil
18. U-Drive Boats
19. Imperial Oil
20. N.T.C.L. Shipyards (Northern Transportation Company Ltd.)
21. Department of Transport Marine
22. Fisheries
23. Railways
24. Airport
25. Laundries
26. Air Service
27. Indian Village
28. Indian Village
29. Shipyards
30. Docks





## NORTHWEST TERRITORIES GENERAL INFORMATION

1,304,903 square miles, being 33.9 percent of the area of Canada.

Mainland area	730,266 square miles
Freshwater area	51,465 square miles
Offshore Islands area	523,172 square miles

Coastline length — approximately 9,500 miles.

Highway system — 841 miles.

Population — 1971 - 35,526: 1966 - 28,128

Business Volume 1970 — approximately \$215,000,000

Value of mineral production included above — \$124,000,000

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